



January 28, 2016

IOWA INSTRUCTION 440-398 – IOWA SECOND LEVEL REVIEW CHECKLIST FOR
PROTRACTS GENERATED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
INCENTIVES PROGRAM OBLIGATIONS

IA398.0 PURPOSE

To distribute instructions for completing second level reviews for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract obligations.

IA398.1 SCOPE

These instructions will be followed by all NRCS employees involved in obligating EQIP contracts.

IA398.2 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

This Iowa Instruction will be posted on the Iowa NRCS Employee Website, which can be accessed under the Topics/People/NRCS Employees/Iowa NRCS eDirectives or at this link [Iowa NRCS eDirectives website](#).

IA398.3 EXHIBITS

See attachments.

/s/Kurt Simon
State Conservationist

Attachments

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(IA Instruction 440-398 First Edition – January 2016)

**IOWA INSTRUCTION 440-398 – IOWA SECOND LEVEL REVIEW
CHECKLIST FOR PROTRACTS GENERATED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES
PROGRAM OBLIGATIONS**

1. PURPOSE:

To distribute instructions for completing second level reviews for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract obligations.

2. EXPLANATION:

National Bulletin 300-16-1 “Contract Quality and Review of EQIP Applications Prior to Obligation,” provided national guidance on a new quality assurance process designed to prevent recurring errors in contracting. This guidance included an obligation checklist to verify criteria related to each application prior to contract obligation. The checklist included the minimum criteria that must be checked at the field office level prior to contract obligation. The area or State Office level were to use the checklist at the second level review as a pre-obligation quality assurance prior to obligation.

States were given the choice to use existing checklists if the existing checklist includes all of the minimum criteria and conforms to program provisions. The existing “Second Level Review Checklist for Iowa” was updated to include the minimum criteria and was approved for use by National Office. The updated “Iowa Second Level Review Checklist for ProTracts Generated EQIP Obligations” is attached to this Instruction.

The Iowa Second Level Review Checklist for ProTracts Generated EQIP Obligations will be used for all EQIP obligations. Following are instructions for using this checklist:

District Conservationist (DC) –

- Completes application information at the top of the form.
- Completes Tabs 1 and 2. These questions are technical questions related to the conservation planning aspects of the application.
- Signs the bottom of the form before providing the application packet to the farm bill specialist (FBS) to complete the first level review for the application. Uploads completed checklist to the Document Management System (DMS).

Farm Bill Specialist (FBS) –

- Completes Tabs 3, 4, 5, and 6 as part of the first level review prior to obligation of the contract.
- Signs the first level review certification when completed and the application is ready for second level review. Uploads completed first level review to DMS.

Area Program Specialist (APS) –

- Reviews first level review for Tabs 3, 4, 5, and 6 and confirms application is ready for obligation.
- The APS will select a minimum of three (3) approved applications per field office or five (5) percent of approved applications per field office whichever is greater for a technical review by the area office prior to obligation. For applications selected for technical review, the APS will provide the application packet and checklist to the appropriate area discipline to complete the technical review of the application. The technical review includes a review of Tabs 1 and 2 of the checklist. If deficiencies are found, the application packet will be provided to the field office for corrective action. When the technical review is complete and correct, the area staff doing the technical review will sign and date the checklist and provide application packet along with completed checklist to APS.

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- The APS will track all applications selected for technical review on the attached “Second Level Technical Review Log.” At the end of the fiscal year (FY) obligations, the APS will provide this log to the State EQIP Coordinator.
- APS signs the second level review certification when application is ready for obligation. Upload the completed checklist to DMS. APS accepts second level review in Fund Manager.
- Notify the assistant state conservationist for field operations (ASTC-FO) that the second level review is completed and the application is ready for obligation.

Area Technical Staff (Area Resource Conservationist (ARC), Resource Conservationist (RC), Agricultural Engineer (AE))

- For applications selected for an area technical review, the appropriate discipline will complete a technical review of the application for Tabs 1 and 2 that were completed by the DC.
- When the technical review is completed satisfactorily, the appropriate area discipline will sign the technical review certification on the checklist.
- ARC/RC/AE will provide the completed and signed checklist to the APS to be uploaded to DMS for the contract.

Approved By:

Date:

/s/Kurt Simon
State Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

January 28, 2016

Attachment: Iowa Second Level Review Checklist for Protracts Generated EQIP Obligations
Second Level Technical Review Log

IOWA INSTRUCTION 440-398 – IOWA SECOND LEVEL REVIEW CHECKLIST FOR PROTRACTS GENERATED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM OBLIGATIONS

Reset

Iowa Second Level Review Checklist for ProTracts Generated EQIP Obligations

Contract #: _____ Contract Participant: _____

Subaccount: _____ Obligation Amount: _____

County: _____ Date: _____

* Required to be completed by Field Office prior to requesting first-level review.

Tab 1			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. Conservation Plan Maps are in accordance with National Conservation Planning Policy (Plan, Location, and Soils Map). Planned conservation practices are shown on Conservation Plan Map. (440-CPM, Part 512 Subpart C Section 512.43B). *
			2. Soil Map, Soil Summary Report and Legend for each tract. *
			3. Location Map (Plat Map). *
			4. Watershed boundary and priority area maps (if required for ranking). *

Tab 2			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. The Toolkit Conservation Plan includes appropriate NRCS and Participant signatures and dates (must be signed by NRCS prior to first-level review). *
			2. If the planner responsible for writing the conservation plan and contract is not a certified planner, it must have been reviewed by a certified planner. [440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart I, Section 515.80] *
			3. NRCS-CPA-52 Section D – Client Objectives, and Section E – Need for Action are completed. *
			4. NRCS-CPA-52 Section F - has an identified natural resource concern that can be addressed. [H_190_NECH_610.16] *
			5. Planned Conservation Practices treat the identified resource concern. [440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart I, Section 515.80] *
			6. Resource concerns identified on the application ranking tool are supported by those listed in the NRCS-CPA-52. [440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart I, Section 515.80] *
			7. If required for the ranking, Before and After RUSLE2 report is included in the program folder. *
			8. NRCS-CPA-52 Section J Impacts to Special Environmental Concerns is completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threatened and Endangered Species evaluation documentation is in the case file as needed. - Iowa Cultural Resources Flowchart is included. - ISITES map is included. *
			9. NRCS-CPA-52 Section K Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If applicable, all permits from USACE and /or IDNR have been obtained and are in folder. *
			10. NRCS-CPA-52, Section O – Determination of Significance (appropriate box is checked). [H_190_NECH_610.44] *
			11. NRCS-CPA-52, Section P – Planner Signature. [H_190_NECH_610.16] *

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Tab 2			
Yes	No	NA	
			12. NRCS-CPA-52, Section Q - NEPA Compliance Finding (appropriate box is checked - usually Box 3). <i>[H_190_NECH_610.16]*</i>
			13. NRCS-CPA-52, Section R – Rationale Supporting the Finding from Section Q (reference to National EQIP EA Completed). <i>[H_190_NECH_610.16]*</i>
			14. NRCS-CPA-52, Section S – Responsible Federal Official Signature (usually the DC). <i>[H_190_NECH_610.42 (5) (ii & iii)]*</i>
			15. If applicable, all required additional plans/audits/designs completed (i.e. Forestry Plan, Organic System Plan, approved energy audit, approved CNMP). *
			16. All required job sheets are filled out and included in the program folder. *
			17. OPTIONAL – Cost estimates have been completed for all practices. *

Tab 3			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. If applicable, "Commence Before Contract Obligation Waiver" approved by STC and in folder.
			2. The Ag Producer box is checked YES in ProTracts. <i>[440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart F, Section 515.51 A (1)]</i>
			3. The Farm/Tract(s) listed in the Legal Description of form NRCS-CPA-1155, "Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations," matches the FSA 156EZ for the applicant. Applicant is listed as owner/operator and /or other producer on the FSA 156EZ.
			4. Form NRCS-CPA-1155, "Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations," all component numbers are correct, components match planned amounts, and component payment rates match subaccount and/or HU designation.
			5. Contract items scheduled will not result in a duplicate payment from this contract, other contracts, or programs. <i>[440-CPM, Part 512, Subpart G, Section 512.65, and 440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart F, Section 515.52]</i>
			6. Planned practices with lifespan of greater than one year are not scheduled as re-occurring practices. <i>[440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart I, Section 515.81]</i>
			7. Acreage for each CIN does not exceed total acreage of contract.
			8. In ProTracts, a planned practice and contract item (CIN) is scheduled within 12 months of the obligation date.
			9. In ProTracts, the contract expiration date is set as close to 12 months past the last scheduled practice as possible. The use of a 9/30 or 12/31 date is recommended.
			10. Form NRCS-CPA-1155, "Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations," has been signed and dated by the Designated Conservationist for technical adequacy prior to participant's original signature and date. Ensure the date on the printed 1155 and the date in ProTracts match.
			11. The Period of performance is reflected on form NRCS-CPA-1202, "Conservation Program Contract" and form NRCS-CPA-1155, "Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations." REQUIRED
			12. The participant(s) signature on form NRCS-CPA-1202, "Conservation Program Contract" is signed by the applicant with the appropriate dates. REQUIRED
			13. The date the participant(s) signed form NRCS-CPA-1202, "Conservation Program Contract," and CPC appendix has been electronically recorded in ProTracts.
			14. In ProTracts the approval date in ProTracts matches the approval date on the hard copy of the 1202.

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Tab 3			
Yes	No	NA	
			15. The obligation amount on Block 5 of form NRCS-CPA-1202, "Conservation Program Contract," matches the obligation amount in Fund Manager. REQUIRED
			16. The CPC appendix is the correct version, and signature(s) and dates match the NRCS-CPA-1202.
			17. Ensure application date for the NRCS-CPA-1200 is appropriate for the batching date/ranking cutoff and that it matches the application date entered in ProTracts. Ensure that the date in ProTracts is the date the last item was received in the application packet.
			18. In the ProTracts participant info, BF/SD/LRP/VFR has been recorded and matches the NRCS-CPA-1200, Payment Schedule, and fund code if applicable.
			19. OPTIONAL – If used, the pre-screening tool signed by the D.C. is included in the program folder.
			20. The program ranking is in the file.
			21. Land has been irrigated two of the last five years for contracted conservation practices associated with irrigation. <i>[440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart B, Section 515.52 Land Eligibility (5) (ii)]</i>

Tab 4			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. Standard Form (SF) 1199A, "Direct Deposit Sign-Up" information has been signed and dated within the last 3 years and entered correctly in to ProTracts, Vendor Info. REQUIRED. REMOVE FROM FILE AFTER OBLIGATION.
			2. Ensure Vendor Code is Active in Participant Information.
			3. For entities – Ensure DUNS number has been entered and SAM registration is current, (at time of application date in ProTracts).

Tab 5			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. Concurrence from the landowner (if leased) to install structural and/or vegetative practices: If leased, landowner must concur with all structural practices being installed (may be included as part of the lease). Landowner can also sign NRCS-CPA-1202 with 0% payment shares. <i>[440-CPM, Part 512, Subpart C, Section 512.22 A (2)]</i>
			2. Applicant has control of the land for period of contract. <i>[440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart F, Section 515.52, and Part 512, Subpart C, Section 512.22]</i>
			3. If applicable, Form FSA-211, "Power of Attorney" (dated 12/17/2008 or after) or NRCS-CPA-009 (2008 or prior) or a notarized POA indicating the appointed attorney-in-fact for the participant. (Signature Authority) REQUIRED
			4. If applicable, Form CCC-902E, "Farm Operating Plan, for an Entity 2009 and Subsequent Program Years," or Form CCC-901, "Member's Information 2009 and Subsequent Years," or other supporting documentation indicating authorized signatory. (Signature Authority) REQUIRED
			5. For contracts that include public land, the land is a working component of the participant's agricultural or forestry operation. <i>[440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart F, Section 515.52, and 440-CPM, Part 521, Subpart D, Section 521.31]</i>

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Tab 6			
Yes	No	NA	
			1. Pre-approval letters are in the program folder.
			2. Ensure the Contract (Application) number is at the top of the Conservation Assistance Notes. The Conservation Assistance Notes should be concise, factual statements that document information relating to significant activities and situations (covering the Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How - i.e., planning and application materials delivered, site visits, contract reviews, potential non-compliance, scheduling arrangements, and correspondence with the participant). Notes should be in chronological order in order of date created or receipt stamped (most recent on top). <i>[440-CPM, Part 512, Subpart C, Section 512.43 A (2) (xvii)]</i>

I certify all documents that require "original" signatures are originals and items in Tab 1 & 2 are completed according to policy.

District Conservationist: _____ Date: _____

Application selected for Technical review ☐ Y ☐ N If yes, reviews and signature needed below as indicated.

TECHNICAL REVIEW

ARC/RC Signature Date

OBLIGATION REVIEW

First Level Review

FBS Signature Date

Second Level Review

APS Signature Date

IA Version: January 6, 2016

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